THE

Chriſtian Hiſtory;

Containing Accounts of the Propagation and Revival of Religion in *Great Britain*, *America*, &c.

Saturday JULY 28. 1744. § N°. 74.

Account of the Revival of Religion at Sutton *in the County of* Worceſter, *finiſhed.*

AND now before I cloſe this Relation, by Way of Acknowledgment to the great God, and that he may have all the Praiſe of his wonderful Works among us, I would obſerve: That as it has been moſt frequently under the *Preaching* of the *Word* that ſuch among us as have been the Subjects of this bleſſed Work have received their *firſt Convictions*; that yet I ſeldom perceived a Sermon that ſeemed beſt calculated according to the Wiſdom of Man's Brain, that brought one Soul under laſting Convictions. It hath ever been, ſo far as it hath fallen under my Obſervation, from the Application of ſome plain *ſcriptural Truths*; and not from rhetorical Phraſes, nor from the moſt conciſe logical Reaſonings, but moſt uſually ſome plain unpremeditated Sentences that God has own'd and bleſs'd. While learned and moſt ſtudied Sermons have ſometimes fetch'd a Flood of Tears, and been followed with great Applauſe; yet I cannot ſay I ever knew ſuch a Sermon gain Souls. They have inform'd the Underſtanding, regulated the Judgment: but to humble, convince, and convert Men from Sin to God, hath not been from hence. So that I am convinced there has been much more attending ſome Sermons than was deviſed by the Heart of Man or than Man could effect: When ſometimes a ſingle plain Sentence or two in a Sermon has been conveyed from the Goſpel Bow with ſuch Power, as hath given ſo deep a Wound to ſtout and ſtubborn Sinners; that verily, they have been no more able to cure themſelves than to create a World; have gone

ſorth trembling in the Bitterneſs of their Souls, with Abhorrence of themſelves and of their old Courſes; and found no Reſt 'till their whole Foundation hath been pluck'd from them, and they have been conſtrain'd with bleeding Hearts, to approach a before unknown Phyſician, *Jeſus Chriſt*.

Moreover, God's Sovereignty has been as viſible, in the *Time* of improving the like *Means*.

As plain and as ſolemn Truths of the Goſpel have been ſometimes delivered with Abundance of Earneſtneſs and Affection; one would have thought ſurely Sinners will now hear, and take it to Heart; experienced Chriſtians have thought verily it is *full of the Spirit of the Lord and of Power*: But *Sinners in Zion* have not been alarm'd, nor to Appearance touch'd thereby. Whereas Sermons not ſeemingly for Matter or Manner, morely likely, have been wonderfully own'd; and the great God hath in ſuch a triumphant Manner come down upon the Mount; that many have gone away Heart-ſick for Jeſus Chriſt, and have been attended with ſuch a mighty Change, as hopefully to have appear'd the Subjects of divine Grace.

Moreover that it is the bleſſed Work of the great *Jehovah*, I do certainly know. And notwithſtanding the Mockings of many who have the Subjects thereof greatly in Deriſion; and altho' ſome devout Men may think it would be Service to God, to cruſh them under their Feet; yet with them, let me live, let me die, and my Soul be with theirs after Death: I am not aſhamed the World ſhould know it. I venture my Salvation upon it that this is God's bleſſed Work. And why? For it hath the *broad Seal of Heaven* ſtamp'd upon it. JESUS *the faithful and true Witneſs*, hath inſtructed us, how we ſhall know his Diſciples from Deceivers, *viz.* From *their Fruit*, as *Math.* 7th, and whence this Fruit ſprings, as John 14. 21. *He that hath my Commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.*

Now if that *Faith which Works by Love*, and which commands the Heart & Life into the Ways of Obedience, be the Fruit which cannot grow upon Thorns, but upon the Heaven-born-Plants, form'd and ſealed by God's own right Hand; this is then the *Work* of God. For I am ſure *theſe three Years* ſince the Work took Place powerfully amongſt us, I have had the Comfort of beholding more Appearance of ſuch like Fruit than ever before in all my Life.

That

That I have known many weak and childiſh Things in the Conduct of our *young Chriſtians*, I do acknowledge, and who could rationally look to find ſuch as are juſt born, behave and act like *Men?* Yet 'tis a joyful Thing to have Children born in a Church as well as in a Kingdom or Common-Wealth: and a cruel Foe is he that like *Babylon* of old will daſh their Heads againſt the Stones, who are God's Offspring, and have need of the Breaſt and to be taught to go. An Infant, 'ere it can ſpeak Senſe, will diſcover as true a Reliſh for the Breaſt, as the Adult can have to their Food. And be our *young Chriſtians* deſtitute of that Ripeneſs of Judgment, and in Want of that Wiſdom and Prudence which 'tis hopeful they will grow up unto; yet ſuch as experimentally know what Communion with God means, may diſcover as true a Reliſh for divine Things in many of our young Chriſtians, as can be found among the moſt ſolid of God's Saints.)

Zion's Children, in theſe remarkable Days, may frequently be obſerv'd, not drunk with Enthuſiaſm, as ſome would fain ſuppoſe, nor over-heated in their Brain as others would fain have it, but overcome with the Love of Chriſt! Raptured in the Joys of believing. The World eſteems their Life Madneſs. But, if a gracious God would pleaſe to give thoſe who now deſpiſe them, a Taſte of that *Joy unſpeakable and full of Glory*; they would ſurely ſpeak of theſe Things in another Manner. See 1 *John* 4. 13.

However I am not unſenſible that ſome have been tainted too much with Enthuſiaſm: but I am as ſure it is not generally the Caſe, with the Subjects of this Work.

And when I find Perſons that ſome Years ago, were frothy, carnal, worldly and vain in their Behaviour, who diſcover'd their Hearts were all over in the World and it's Luſts and Vanities; and lo! they are become ſober, grave, their Converſation ſolid and ſpiritual; who, meet them when you will, they ſeem to have no Reliſh for any Diſcourſe, but of the Things of Chriſt and Heaven, and how they may get forward in the Way of Faith and Holineſs towards their bleſſed Home; and to whom in every Reſpect the Way of God's Commandments appears their Delight: after all declaring themſelves mean and miſerable, manifeſting a broken Spirit, and a continual War with remaining Corruptions, adoring the Doctrines of Free-Grace, ever admiring and rejoycing in Chriſt Jeſus, declaring their whole Life is upon him

and in him. Now if this does not evidence them theSubjects of ſomething higher than Enthuſiaſm, I am much miſtaken.

I have been aſtoniſh'd ſometimes to find even ſome good Men ſo hard to bear down upon this bleſſed Work, which hath ſo glorioufly prevail'd in many Places; and I doubt not hath brought forth in *this Place*, more of *Zion's* Children, in the Space of *two Years*, then ever was born here before in the Space of *twenty Years*. The Lord make their Number an hundred Time ſo many more as they be.

And I do ſolemnly Profeſs it, that notwithſtanding what ſome wiſe Men, and great Men according to the Fleſh have ſaid and done in order to cruſh the Subjects of thisGrace, and to prevent the Progreſs of this Work; picking up all the Failings of it's Subjects, and I fear repreſenting ſome Things other-ways than they ever were, and faſtning upon the whole Work what ſome unguardedPerſons have ſinfully done; and perhaps moſt of ſuch, no other than pretended Subjects of the Work, whom the *Devil* hath ſow'd as Tares among the Wheat to ſcandalize God's bleſſed Work of Grace, and to bring a Reproach upon the trueLovers of Jeſus Chriſt. After all the whole World can ſay to blemiſh this bleſſed Work of Regeneration; I had rather, be only ſo happy, as to be uſed in God's Hand for a mere Inſtrument to gain *but one Sinner* to partake of ſo glorious a Work, than to gain the whole World.

And I heartily deſire I may ever be of the Mind, rather to ſuſtain the Loſs of all Things, yea rather to ſuffer the crueleſt of Deaths, than to ſpeak an unthankful Word concerning what *the moſt High* God hath done for a poor ſinful People, reſpecting the precious Shower of his Grace that hath fallen upon us. And if any Man is ſo bold and profane, as to perſiſt in ſtriking at the *Power of Godlineſs* and the very Life of the Chriſtian Religion; he ſhall anſwer it to CHRIST; he hath done it unto him.

Reverend and honour'd Sir, I doubt not you will Pardon the Freedom I have taken in the Cloſe of this Relation of what God hath done for us: Verily the Reproaches of many have compelled me; and wo be unto me, if I flinch in the Cauſe of CHRIST.

So after aſking your ferventPrayers for us at theThrone of Grace: I ſubſcribe your unworthy Brother in CHRIST JESUS, *David Hall.*

Sutton, May 28. 1744.

We are now to give the Reader a refreſhing View of the further Progreſs of the divine Work in various Parts of SCOTLAND: *Tho' we cannot diſmiſs for the preſent the religious Hiſtory of* NEW-ENGLAND *without intimating, that this extraordinary Work of GOD is now breaking out a-freſh in a ſurprizing Manner in the two Pariſhes of the Town of* Attleboro' *in the County of* Briſtol; *a particular Account of which we hope we ſhall e're long be in a Capacity to publiſh.*

Extracts from the Rev. Mr. ROBE's *Monthly Chriſtian Hiſtory*, N. I. viz. *for* November 1743.

IN my *Narrative*, the hiſtorical Account of the Work of of God, in awakening, convincing and converting Sinners, *&c.* is brought forward to the 18th of *April* laſt, † as far as it was diſcernable, in ſeveral Congregations of this national Church, and made known to me then; I ſhall now proceed to give in this Paper, ſuch an Account of the State and Progreſs of this bleſſed Work, as it has come to my Knowledge, ſince the laſt named Time.

Progreſs of the Work at KILSYTH.

In this Congregation and Pariſh of *Kilſyth*, there have been ſeveral awakened, ſince the aforeſaid Month of *April*: Some of them belonged to the Pariſh, others, if not the moſt of them, were Strangers: To uſe the Words of the excellent Author of the *Fulfilling of the Scriptures*, There were few Sabbaths paſſed, but whereon there were ſome Inſtances.---Yet there was a great Difference between this and the former Summer, as to the Numbers of the Awakened, in this and the neighbouring Congregations.---During that Seaſon, the Number of the Awakened was like the cutting down, and reaping in the Harveſt, it was in Handfuls: But now it was only like the gleaning Grapes, when the Vintage is done; and as the ſhaking of an Olive-Tree, two or three being in the Top of the uppermoſt Bough, four or five in the utmoſt fruitful Branches thereof.---Another remarkable Difference is not to be forgotten, that, ſince *February* laſt, altho' ſeveral of the Awakened had very ſharp Convictions, and pungent inward Diſtreſs, and were made to cry out in the Bitterneſs of their Souls, either in the Congregation, or afterwards; yet there were none of them whoſe Bodies were affected with

† See CHRISTIAN HISTORY, Numb. 44. p. 351.

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convulſive Motions, or Hyſtericiſms of any Sort, as ſome few of theſe under the preceeding Year were.---Some ſuch were to be ſeen, now and then, in our Worſhipping Aſſemblies, but they were of theſe Awakened formerly, ſome of this, and ſome of other Pariſhes.---Not a few of theſe awakened have attained unto ſolid Conſolation, and good Hope, thro' Grace; but it was by ſlower Steps than theſe of the laſt Year. Their Convictions, tho' ſharp, yet continued longer; and tho' they eſſayed to take hold of JEHOVAH's Strength, that they might make Peace with him, from Time to Time, yet they continued toſſed with Tempeſt, and not comforted; and their Comfort, when it came, was more gradual than moſt of the former Sort.---It is not ſo pleaſant to obſerve, that a Work of Conviction hath ſtopt ſhort of Converſion, or at leaſt hath not come unto a longed for Iſſue as yet, with more of the Awakened this laſt Seaſon, than under that of the former, keeping to the Proportion of the different Numbers.

There were ſome came to my Knowledge, who had been awakened ſince *May* 1742. or about that Time, and who gave me a moſt ſatisfying and ſolid Account of the Beginning and Progreſs of a Work of Conviction with them; and, as far as I could, upon the ſtricteſt Examination, judge of the State of another, of their having embraced the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, appearing to be ſavingly converted.---I came to know them by their offering themſelves to me for Converſe and Trial, in order to their Admiſſion to the Lord's Supper.---It was ſurpriſing to me that I had not heard of them before, being ſome of them had been openly and notoriouſly careleſs about Religion, and immoral, and it was, at leaſt, a Twelve-month ſince this good Work begun with them.---Particularly one of them, who had ſeldom attended upon public Ordinances, never appeared to have the leaſt religious Concern, but was obſervably profane, ungodly and unrighteous, ſurpriz'd me, by offering himſelf for Trial and Converſe before the giving the holy Supper in the Congregation. I had never heard of any Change upon him; and therefore did not think of being long detained by him, in that Courſe of miniſterial Dealing I was then employed in.---I was agreeably diſappointed by his narrating to me the Lord's Dealings with his Soul from *June* 1742, to the End of *June* laſt, when I had this Communing with him; ſo that I could not but conclude, that, if his Exerciſes were ſuch as he told me they had been and were, he

was in a moſt hopeful State.---It is neither unſuitable to this Paper, nor will be diſagreeable to ſome Readers to give an Abſtract of his Story. He ſaid, That about the Beginning of *June* firſt mentioned, he was walking upon the Evening of the Lord's Day about his Houſe, which is ſituate about two Miles from the Church, and obſerving a Man of his Acquaintance, who lived at a greater Diſtance, returning from the Church, he went to meet him, and aſked, *Neighbour, what News at the Church to Day?* "Strange News *ſaid the other*; for *Cambuſ-* "*lang* is come to *Kilſyth!* and there was a great Cry and "Diſtreſs among the People at the Church To-day."---Upon this he ſaid, that he reſolved next Lord's Day to go and ſee, merely to ſatisfy his Curioſity; *For*, ſaith he, *I did not then mind Ordinances, or ſanctifying the Lord's Day.*---Accordingly next Lord's Day he came to the Church; but while he was near Midway, at a certain Houſe he named to me, he ſaid, that he began there to think, that he had hitherto led a very bad and wicked Life; and that if he went on that Way, and did not change his Life, he would certainly go to Hell, and be eternally miſerable; and that he had many ſuch like Tho'ts. He was then ſeized with great Fear and deep Diſtreſs about the State of his Soul, which he then ſaw to be very ſad.----He made a Shift to get to the Church, where the Reverend Mr. *William Bennet*, Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Dennie*, preached; and tho' there were five or ſix awakened, cried out, and were in great Diſtreſs that Day, yet he contained himſelf, tho' his inward Fear and Diſtreſs continued.--- From that Time, he ſaid his ſpiritual Diſtreſs ſeldom left him, and at ſome Times was extremely ſharp. His Convictions were particular, his Exerciſes, Temptations, and Difficulties were ſuch as theſe of the moſt ſharply exerciſed.---Through a Miſtake he never came to me, or any other Miniſter.----He attended punctually upon public Ordinances, read the holy Scripture, which, he ſaid, he found a new Book, and that he ſaw that in it, he never ſaw before.--- He gave me a moſt pleaſant and ſatisfying Account, of his *Repentance towards God, and Faith in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, in Scripture Language, and of a Change of the Diſpoſitions of his Heart, his Words, and outward Practice.---He hath a competent Meaſure of Knowledge. I enquired of the Elders, and others who lived near him, and who had the beſt Acceſs to know him, and obſerve his Life, and all of them teſtified the Change of his outward Practice and Behaviour to that which is blameleſs and Chriſtian;

Chriſtian; and that it had been ſo for ſome Time, as it continueth, by all that I can learn, to this Day. He was admitted by the Church-ſeſſion to the Lord's Table; and afterwards gave me a ſatisfying Account of his ſuitable Exerciſe at that ſolemn Time.

I was Witneſs to the awakening of ſeveral ſecure Sinners this Summer, in ſeveral Congregations where I aſſiſted at the giving of the Lord's Supper, particularly at *Kirkintilloch* and St. *Ninians*.

The Lord's Supper was given in this Congregation upon the firſt Sabbath of *July*; at which Time there were upwards of fifteen Hundred, who receiv'd that bleſſed Sacrament. There were ſeveral newly awakened at that Time; ſome of whom are come to a hopeful Iſſue; and ſeveral of the Lord's People met with ſo much of his ſenſible Preſence, that they earneſtly deſired to have it given to them a ſecond Time this Seaſon in the Congregation. My Aſſiſtants were theſe Rev. Brethren who were the Overſeers of the neighbouring Pariſhes, and who were able to attend, as hath always been uſual here, and two or three more who had been uſeful in the Lord's bleſſed Work here, from Pariſhes at a greater Diſtance.

Upon the aforeſaid Deſire, the Lord's Supper was given a ſecond Time upon the 21ſt of *Auguſt*, being the third Sabbath of that Month.--During all the Days about that ſolemn Time, there was a diſcernable ſerious Concern amongſt the People.--Not a few were awakened, and ſome of them from Pariſhes at a conſiderable Diſtance.--Upon the Lord's Day, there was the moſt conſiderable Concern, and unuſual Motion among the People that hath been ever ſeen in the Remembrance of Man. During the moſt Part of the Time of receiving the Lord's Supper, many were in a moſt melting Frame, filled with a Senſe of the Love of God ſhed abroad in their Hears, by the Holy Ghoſt given to him. Others could not contain themſelves from ſpeaking of his Glory, and praiſing the Lamb with an audible Voice.--The ſtately Goings of God our King were ſeen in his Sanctuary.---And ſeveral being ſick of Love were ready to faint under it.---It was alſo remarked what the Author of *the fulfilling of the Scriptures* ſaith of the good Days were in *Ireland*, That many ſlept little or none either the Saturday or Sabbath Night, but were employed in Prayer and ſinging his Praiſes the moſt of that Time. There were between ſixteen and ſeventeen Hundred who commnnicated at this Time. (*To be continued.*)